
A third of parents say their children's mental health has suffered during lockdown

Embargoed until 00:01 on Thursday 29 October 2020

One in three parents (32%) say that their child's mental health and wellbeing has got worse since lockdown started on the 23rd of March, according to new research from Parent Zone for [Digital Parenting Week](#).

Families with lower household incomes felt this most strongly. 36% of parents earning up to £19,999 said their children's mental health had deteriorated compared with 31% of those earning between £20,000 and £54,999.

Parents of children aged 12-15 had the highest reported number (32%) of those saying their child's mental health and wellbeing had got worse.

The research, carried out by Ipsos MORI for Parent Zone, also found that a quarter of parents on the lowest incomes said they were not personally coping at all well or not very well as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. This also reflected household income: 25% of parents earning up to £19,999 said they were not coping well compared to 21% earning up to between £20,000 and £34,999; 16% earning between £35,000 and £54,999; and 14% of those earning £55K+.

Parents feel the government could be doing more to support them. 40% of parents want the government to provide clearer rules on social distancing, 37% want the government to insist employers offer flexible working, and a quarter (25%) simply want acknowledgement for the role that parents are playing during the coronavirus.

Additionally, parents also wanted greater flexibility in terms of childcare provision for parents who are working (34%), more exceptions for children in the rules on social distancing (31%) and financial help for childcare costs (27%).

Doing more

More than half of parents (55%) say they have been doing more since March to help with their children's education, while 48% have had to do more to manage their children's

mental health and wellbeing. These figures are higher for mothers (59% and 52% respectively).

Meanwhile, 3 in 10 working parents (30%) say that coronavirus arrangements have had a fairly negative or very negative impact on their ability to do the work they need to do as part of their job.

But technology has been a lifeline for many parents: more than three-quarters (77%) say connected technology has helped them get through the period of restrictions.

Vicki Shotbolt, founder and CEO of Parent Zone, said: “The mental health of significant numbers of children has been worsened by coronavirus restrictions. Parents have put in extra shifts to help with their children's wellbeing, as well as with their education – while, in many cases, struggling to continue to do their jobs. It is hardly surprising that parents feel the government could do more to recognise the extent to which they have picked up the slack. A quarter would simply like some recognition. The only good news to come out of this research is that tech has been a real boon for families.”

Editor's note:

Research was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Parent Zone. It surveyed a nationally representative quota sample of 4,459 adults in the United Kingdom aged 16-75 of which 1,056 were identified as parents. Interviews were carried out using its online i:Omnibus between the 16th and 19th October 2020. Data has been weighted to the known offline population proportions for age within gender, government office region, working status and social grade in the UK.

For more information or an interview contact: press@parentzone.org.uk

[Digital Parenting Week](#) is 26-30 October and is a celebration of everything parents have done in this very difficult year, with free resources for schools.

About Parent Zone

Parent Zone are the experts in digital family life. We provide support and information to parents, children and schools, working globally to help families to navigate the internet safely and confidently. We regularly work with parents, schools, governments and businesses to study, understand and address the impact of emerging technologies on young people.